



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## Virginia Employment Commission

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**Virginia's May's Unemployment Rate Decreased by 0.2% to 2.9%;  
Labor Force Participation Rate Increased by 0.3% to 66.5% and Employment  
Increased by 29,462 to 4,440,015**

RICHMOND— Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in May decreased by 0.2 percentage points to 2.9%, which is 0.4 percentage points above the rate from a year ago. According to household survey data in May, the labor force increased by 23,536 to 4,574,349 as the number of unemployed residents decreased by 5,926 to 134,334. The number of employed residents increased by 29,462 to 4,440,015. Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate is 0.8 percentage points below the national rate, which increased by 0.3 percentage points to 3.7%.

The Commonwealth's labor force participation rate increased by 0.3 percentage points to 66.5% in May. The labor force participation rate measures the proportion of the civilian population age 16 and older that is employed or actively looking for work.

In May, Virginia's nonagricultural employment, from the monthly establishment survey increased by 6,900 to 4,146,900. April's preliminary estimate of employment, after revision, increased by 1,900 to 4,140,000. In May, private sector employment increased by 6,600 to 3,418,000 while government employment increased by 300 to 728,900. Within that sector, federal government jobs remained unchanged at 186,400, state government employment decreased by 700 to 157,000, and local government increased by 1,000 to 385,500 over the month.

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Seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment data is produced for eleven industry sectors. In May, six experienced over-the-month job gains, and five experienced a decline. The largest job gain occurred in Professional and Business Services (+3,900) to 815,200. The second largest job gain occurred in Construction (+2,600) to 215,100. The third largest job gain occurred in Education and Health Services (+1,700) to 577,700. The other gains were in Information (+800) to 72,000, Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (+400) to 665,900, and Government (+300) to 728,900.

The largest job loss occurred in Other Services (-1,700) to 193,900. The second largest job loss occurred in Manufacturing (-700) to 245,300. The third largest job loss occurred in Financial Activities (-200) to 216,200. The other losses were in Leisure and Hospitality (-100) to 409,700, and Mining and Logging (-100) to 7,000.

Nonfarm Employment in Virginia* Seasonally Adjusted							
Industry	Employment			April 2023 to May 2023		May 2022 to May 2023	
	May 2023	April 2023	May 2022	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
Total Nonfarm	4,146,900	4,140,000	4,055,400	6,900	0.2%	91,500	2.3%
Total Private	3,418,000	3,411,400	3,341,700	6,600	0.2%	76,300	2.3%
Goods Producing	467,400	465,600	459,600	1,800	0.4%	7,800	1.7%
Mining and Logging	7,000	7,100	7,100	-100	-1.4%	-100	-1.4%
Construction	215,100	212,500	207,600	2,600	1.2%	7,500	3.6%
Manufacturing	245,300	246,000	244,900	-700	-0.3%	400	0.2%
Service-Providing	3,679,500	3,674,400	3,595,800	5,100	0.1%	83,700	2.3%
Private Service Providing	2,950,600	2,945,800	2,882,100	4,800	0.2%	68,500	2.4%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	665,900	665,500	665,200	400	0.1%	700	0.1%
Information	72,000	71,200	69,400	800	1.1%	2,600	3.7%
Financial Activities	216,200	216,400	215,800	-200	-0.1%	400	0.2%
Professional and Business Services	815,200	811,300	802,500	3,900	0.5%	12,700	1.6%
Education and Health Services	577,700	576,000	552,800	1,700	0.3%	24,900	4.5%
Leisure and Hospitality	409,700	409,800	386,400	-100	0.0%	23,300	6.0%
Other Services	193,900	195,600	190,000	-1,700	-0.9%	3,900	2.1%
Government	728,900	728,600	713,700	300	0.0%	15,200	2.1%
Federal Government	186,400	186,400	186,700	0	0.0%	-300	-0.2%
State Government	157,000	157,700	150,800	-700	-0.4%	6,200	4.1%
Local Government	385,500	384,500	376,200	1,000	0.3%	9,300	2.5%

\*Current month's estimates are preliminary.

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From May 2022 to May 2023, the VEC estimates that total nonfarm employment in Virginia increased by 91,500 to 4,146,900, private sector employment increased by 76,300 to 3,418,000, and employment in the public sector increased by 15,200 to 728,900 jobs.

For the eleven industry sectors in Virginia over the year, ten experienced over-the-year job gains, and one experienced a decline. The largest job gain occurred in Education and Health Services (+24,900) to 577,700. The second largest job gain occurred in Leisure and Hospitality (+23,300) to 409,700. The third largest job gain occurred in Government (+15,200) to 728,900. The other gains were in Professional and Business Services (+12,700) to 815,200, Construction (+7,500) to 215,100, Other Services (+3,900) to 193,900, Information (+2,600) to 72,000, Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (+700) to 665,900, Financial Activities (+400) to 216,200, and Manufacturing (+400) to 245,300. The largest job loss occurred in Mining and Logging (-100) to 7,000.

Government employment increased by 15,200 to 728,900. Within that sector, federal government jobs decreased by 300 to 186,400, state government employment increased by 6,200 to 157,000, and local government increased by 9,300 to 385,500 over the year.

Nonfarm Employment in Virginia* Seasonally Adjusted							
Virginia	Employment			April 2023 to May 2023		May 2022 to May 2023	
	May 2023	April 2023	May 2022	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
Total Nonfarm	4,146,900	4,140,000	4,055,400	6,900	0.2%	91,500	2.3%
Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford MSA	81,600	82,000	79,600	-400	-0.5%	2,000	2.5%
Charlottesville MSA	123,400	122,700	119,500	700	0.6%	3,900	3.3%
Harrisonburg MSA	71,300	71,100	69,700	200	0.3%	1,600	2.3%
Lynchburg MSA	105,800	105,200	103,200	600	0.6%	2,600	2.5%
Northern Virginia MSA	1,567,000	1,561,400	1,528,100	5,600	0.4%	38,900	2.5%
Richmond MSA	714,000	710,300	688,700	3,700	0.5%	25,300	3.7%
Roanoke MSA	165,800	165,200	161,300	600	0.4%	4,500	2.8%
Staunton MSA	53,100	53,000	51,600	100	0.2%	1,500	2.9%
Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News MSA	801,100	799,100	788,200	2,000	0.3%	12,900	1.6%
Winchester MSA	70,400	70,500	69,100	-100	-0.1%	1,300	1.9%

\*Current month's estimates are preliminary.

Seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment data is produced for ten metropolitan areas. In May, eight experienced over-the-month job gains, and two experienced a decline. The largest job gain occurred in Northern Virginia MSA (+5,600) to 1,567,000. The second largest job gain occurred in Richmond MSA (+3,700) to 714,000. The third largest job gain occurred in Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News MSA (+2,000) to 801,100. The other gains were in Charlottesville MSA (+700) to 123,400, Lynchburg MSA (+600) to 105,800, Roanoke MSA (+600) to 165,800, Harrisonburg MSA (+200)

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to 71,300, and Staunton MSA (+100) to 53,100. The largest job loss occurred in Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford MSA (-400) to 81,600. The second largest job loss occurred in Winchester MSA (-100) to 70,400.

Over the year, ten experienced over-the-year job gains, and none experienced a decline. The largest job gain occurred in Northern Virginia MSA (+38,900) to 1,567,000. The second largest job gain occurred in Richmond MSA (+25,300) to 714,000. The third largest job gain occurred in Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News MSA (+12,900) to 801,100. The other gains were in Roanoke MSA (+4,500) to 165,800, Charlottesville MSA (+3,900) to 123,400, Lynchburg MSA (+2,600) to 105,800, Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford MSA (+2,000) to 81,600, Harrisonburg MSA (+1,600) to 71,300, Staunton MSA (+1,500) to 53,100, and Winchester MSA (+1,300) to 70,400.

## NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED DATA

Virginia's unadjusted unemployment rate increased by 0.2% to 2.7% in May. It has decreased by 0.2 of a percentage point compared to last year. Compared to a year ago, the number of unemployed decreased by 4,615 to 123,312, household employment increased by 175,461 to 4,483,968, and the labor force increased by 170,846 to 4,607,280. Virginia's not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate is 0.7% below the national unadjusted rate, which increased by 0.3% to 3.4%.

Compared to last month, the May unadjusted workweek for Virginia's 161,200 manufacturing production workers increased by 0.3 to 41.2 hours. Average hourly earnings of private-sector production workers increased by \$0.04 to \$24.37, and average weekly earnings increased by \$8.94 to \$1,004.04.

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**Technical note:** Estimates of unemployment and industry employment levels are obtained from two separate monthly surveys. Resident employment and unemployment data are mainly derived from the Virginia portion of the national Current Population Survey (CPS), a household survey conducted each month by the U.S. Census Bureau under contract with BLS, which provides input to the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program (often referred to as the "household" survey). Industry employment data is mainly derived from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) survey, a monthly survey of approximately 18,000 Virginia businesses conducted by BLS, which provides estimates of employment, hours, and earnings data broken down by industry for the nation as a whole, all states and most major metropolitan areas (often referred to as the "establishment" survey). Both industry and household estimates are revised each month based on additional information from updated survey reports compiled by the BLS. For national figures and information on how COVID-19 affected collection of the BLS establishment and household surveys in April 2020, refer to the BLS May [Employment Situation](#) press release for details.

*The statistical reference week for the household survey this month was the week of May 7-13, 2023*

The Virginia Employment Commission plans to release the May local area unemployment rates on Wednesday, June 28, 2023. The data will be available on our website [www.VirginiaWorks.com](http://www.VirginiaWorks.com). The June 2023 statewide unemployment rate and employment data for both the state and metropolitan areas are scheduled to be released on Friday, July 21, 2023.